



**STRONGER WITH
BREASTMILK ONLY**

No water until 6 months
for a healthier baby



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The *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* Initiative Design Process:

Guide for Designing a National *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* Initiative to Improve Rates of Giving Infants Breastmilk Only in the First Six Months of Life

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How is this document organized?

A number of tools and resources are provided in annex to this document. The following icons signal their availability.

Icon	Type of resources
	Tools that can be employed to carry out a specific activity.
	Information, analysis or material that can be tailored to a country's unique context.

Step 0. Pre-Design Preparation

Not included in the five steps, but nonetheless important is the preparation that is required before starting the design and implementation process for the initiative. The preparation phase creates a strong foundation for the *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* initiative design by engaging national support from multiple stakeholders. Below are essential preparatory activities.

Illustrative timeframe: 1 month

What need to be done	Description	Tools
0.1 Set up a dedicated task force and draft Terms of Reference (TOR)	<p>Identify the people to help to carry out the preparation activities as well as the adaptation and design of the national <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> initiative. The task force should engage representatives from the participant groups in the design and monitoring process and provide ongoing oversight of the strategy once developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Burkina Faso, Niger and Nigeria, a tripartite task force was set up with representatives from the Nutrition Divisions of Ministries of Health, UNICEF country programmes and Alive & Thrive. 	
0.2 Convene a task force meeting	Discuss and approve terms of reference, process, timeline and roles for the following steps.	
0.2.1 Define the scope of the initiative and plan for sustainability	Discuss the initiative's scope and sustainability at the outset to help the task force confront the objectives of the initiative with the realities of implementation and consider how best to embed the initiative's objectives into current systems to ensure its scalability and sustainability.	

<p>0.2.2 Define the overarching concept</p>	<p>Discuss and assign writing of a three- to four-page concept note that outlines the background, objectives, activities and next steps of the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> initiative. The concept note will anchor advocacy to facilitate Government buy-in and engagement of other technical and financial partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concept notes from Burkina Faso and Nigeria can be adapted. Introduce the concept note to the Government representative(s) who is(are) best positioned to carry forward the objectives of the initiative. 	 <p>Sample <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> concept notes.</p>
<p>0.2.3 Determine the best mechanism for engaging partners</p>	<p>Engage partners through existing national technical working groups, such those focused on multisectoral initiatives, SBC or Nutrition/IYCF. It may be helpful to work with more than one working group.</p> <p>Establish mechanisms for engaging all participant groups, including community members.</p>	
<p>0.2.4 Determine available and potential sources of funding</p>	<p>Discuss the funding required, existing assets and opportunities. This assessment is necessary to determine the type and amount of resources needed and ensure a successful design and implementation of national initiative activities. Brainstorm among task force members and assign follow up tasks.</p>	 <p>Sample consultant Scope of Work for Steps 1-3.</p>
<p>0.3 Secure government buy-in</p>	<p>Develop strategic approach to engaging government to embed the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> initiative into existing national policies and programmes. Ongoing advocacy for Government buy-in of the initiative is necessary.</p> <p>If the initiative has been included into an annual plan with the Government, review this with Government officials and task force members before introducing the concept note to the Government representative(s).</p>	 <p>Use and/or adapt materials from the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> advocacy pack.</p>

Step 1: Understand the situation and the problem

A good understanding of the national situation and main issues regarding exclusive breastfeeding is necessary to be able to adapt the *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* regional

initiative to the national context. The situation analysis should produce a good understanding of existing policies and programmes, potential implementing partners, communication capacities, the people who play decision-making roles in infant feeding behaviours and the social and behaviour factors that influence infant feeding practices during the first six months of life. SBC strategy design builds from that understanding.

Illustrative timeframe: 2 months + 3-6 months if new, participatory research is carried out

What need to be done	Description	Tools
<p>1.1. Study available information to understand what is known of the situation and define the problem</p>	<p>Collect and analyze existing information to describe the situation and problem, identify the enabling environment, motivations for giving breastmilk only and for giving other substances, and identify people and resources - including media- to involve in the initiative. Collaborate with stakeholders to conduct a desk review of programme and academic literature, and face-to-face consultations. Consultative workshops can be very effective for collecting information and assessing perceptions and practices within a short timeframe and build a common understanding among stakeholders.</p>	 <p>TOOL 1.1: Situation analysis - topics to explore.</p>
<p>1.2. Implement new formative research to fill gaps in understanding</p>	<p>Based on results of desk review and consultations, conduct formative research as needed to gain a deeper understanding of who and what drives infant feeding behaviours among the main participant groups, prioritize drivers to address, and inform data collection.</p> <p>Support participatory approaches that enlist communities' active participation in designing and implementing formative research, so that the problem is diagnosed collaboratively and concerned community members explore practical solutions together.</p> <p>Explore contrasting behaviours, by interviewing caregivers who model giving <i>breastmilk only, no water</i>, as well as those who <i>do give water</i> to</p>	 <p>Sample Terms of Reference for formative research on the social and behavioural determinants of exclusive breastfeeding in Niger.</p>

	<p>their babies younger than six months. Pay attention to opinions and practices of traditional healers, leaders and health care practitioners, particularly those who have changed their practices in favour of exclusive breastfeeding. Explore the environmental, social and behavioural factors that influence early infant feeding behaviours, especially those that have not been sufficiently explored in the past.</p> <p>New research also can be used to identify features that will influence the choice of methods and strategy design, including participant groups' information needs, media habits, social networks and preferred communication channels, the language and images they use to evoke breastfeeding and other infant feeding and care practices. For example, the <i>Zero Water</i> SBCC campaign in Nigeria used formative research findings to develop three types of personas of breastfeeding mothers: Optimal Feeder, Inconsistent Feeder and Sub-Optimal Feeder.</p> <p>New information can be collected by either quantitative or qualitative study methods, depending on the type of information needed and the resources available.</p> <p>Formative research can also establish a baseline and inform a quantitative survey from which to monitor changes as a result of efforts.</p>	
<p>1.3. Complete the situation analysis, with a problem statement, participant analysis, social and behaviour analysis, communication channel analysis and SWOT analysis.</p>	<p>The situation analysis should be completed with several additional analyses, which will help in the development of the SBC strategy.</p> <p>The information collected in the situation review should be summarized in a problem statement. A problem statement is a clear, concise description of the problem(s) that need(s) to be addressed and completes the concept note. It can be used to:</p>	 <p>TOOL 1.2: Adapt the sample problem statement for the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> regional initiative.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus and prioritize content for the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> initiative - Keep partners on track during the effort - Identify gaps in understanding and information - Help monitor that the activities delivered contributed to solving the problem <p>A participant analysis and a social and behavioural analysis identify the main behaviours to change, the social and behavioural determinants to act upon as well as the participants to work with in the social and behavioural change process.</p> <p>It is helpful to include an analysis of communication channels and the situation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) at this stage.</p>	 <p>ADAPT: <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> situation analysis from Burkina Faso.</p>
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Step 2: Develop a national *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* social and behaviour change strategy

The *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* SBC strategy gives direction to the SBC programme by defining:

1. The context, including the social and policy environment, the change framework, and the desired behaviours
2. SBC objectives and SBC theory of change
3. The participant groups to reach (both actors and influencers)
4. SBC activities, communication channels, tools and approaches by participant group, including capacity building

BOX 1: Decisions to be made at this step in the process

Alive & Thrive's process for programme design highlights important decisions that should be made at the strategy development stage of the SBC process. They include:

- Define desired behaviours
- Identify activities, channels and materials
- Consider the appropriate level of resources needed to reach influencing groups
- Pinpoint key factors / behavioural determinants to influence
- Determine how to incorporate emotion and appeal

5. SBC messages
6. Indicators for monitoring and assessing SBC
7. Strategic advocacy activities that support the initiative
8. Monitoring and evaluation plan
9. An implementation plan and estimated budget

The strategy should be developed collaboratively by members of the task force and representatives from implementing partners and other stakeholder groups. An SBC Strategy Design - ‘Co-Creation’ - Workshop can be convened to begin the process and small task groups can be assigned to follow up developing different sections. The finished strategy should be circulated and endorsed by Government and implementing partners.

Illustrative timeframe: 1-2 months

What need to be done	Description	Tools
2.1 Set objectives, desired behaviours	Draw upon learning from Step 1 to define the desired behaviours that will lead to the social and behaviour change objective of giving babies under six months of age breastmilk only, no water, other liquids or foods. For example, ‘not giving infants water in the first six months of life’ is one among several desired behaviours to be done to achieve exclusive breastfeeding.	 <p>Adapt: <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> specific objectives provided in Tables 2-7 of the Guidance document.</p>
2.2 Identify participant groups	Specify the participant or social groups that require focused attention and tailored interventions. For example, grandmothers, fathers, and other important influencers, and specific subgroups of mothers, based on data.	 <p>Adapt Table 1 of the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> Guidance document, while reflecting different groups of mothers to segment.</p>
2.3 Identify key barriers and facilitators (determinants) to desired behaviour(s)	<p>List common barriers to the desired behaviours, and enabling factors or ‘facilitators for change’ by participant group, based on understanding of the local situation.</p> <p>These determinants (change barriers and facilitators) of desired behaviours will help to spot possible ‘small doable actions’, or the small steps that individuals and families can take that helps move them towards the desired behaviour.</p>	 <p>TOOL 2.1 Use the social and behavioural analysis table developed in Step 1.</p>

	<p>Priority small doable actions are clustered around the desired behaviour(s) and selected according to three criteria: 1) the relative impact of the behaviour on the baby’s health, 2) the potential impact on the population and 3) the feasibility of the behaviour.</p> <p>Implementers should work with communities to identify these small actions that are doable for them in their situation.</p>	
2.4 Determine approaches and channels	Use evidence from successful exclusive breastfeeding programmes as well as the information collected in the situation analysis to determine the approaches, channels and activities to be implemented as part of the national <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> strategy.	
2.5 List SBC messages and tools needed	The SBC objectives and analysis help to prioritize SBC messages to be conveyed. A messaging table was developed using the findings from the regional literature review the social and behaviour determinants of exclusive breastfeeding and review of existing community-based breastfeeding messages promoted by national governments in West and Central Africa. This messaging table may be consulted and adapted to national context.	 <p>Consult Annex 3: REGIONAL MESSAGING MATRIX from the Guidance document</p>
2.6 Establish indicators	These indicators should be based on the desired behaviour and social changes, the SBC objectives, SBC theory of change, and SBC activities that have been identified. Indicators for monitoring and assessing your SBC activities and objectives should be “SMART”- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based, and presented in the form of a logical framework.	 <p>TOOL 2.2 Sample M&E indicators</p>
2.7 Develop an implementation plan and budget	A clear understanding of the steps and actions required for implementation as well as financial, human and material	

	resources needed is a critical part of the process. These are aligned with what is described in the SBC strategy document. The budget can take into account what resources are available and what contributions can be made by partners, whether these be in “cash” or in kind.	TOOL 2.3 Road map and budget template
2.8 Document the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> national strategy	The <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> SBC strategy document serves as the reference document for all partners to consult for the implementation of the initiative. It can be considered a ‘living document’, to be adapted over time as lessons are learned.	 <p>Consult <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> SBC strategy from Burkina Faso</p>

Incorporate a Strategic Advocacy Plan in the *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* Strategy

The strategy should include a plan for strategic advocacy to support of the national *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* strategy.

Advocacy aims to influence upstream decisions that affect children’s health, development and rights. For advocacy to be effective, it is important to define and prioritize clear goals or “asks” so that decision-makers can achieve specific actions.

Illustrative timeframe: 1 month

What needs to be done	Description	Tools
2.9 Follow the nine questions to include a strategic advocacy component in the strategy	<p>UNICEF’s strategic advocacy approach lists nine questions to guide plans and concrete advocacy actions. The first five questions help to assess the external advocacy environment; the remaining four take into account the internal advocacy environment and what needs to be done to initiate action (UNICEF, 2010).²</p> <p>Question 1: What do we want? Question 2: Who can make it happen? Question 3: What do they need to hear? Question 4: Who do they need to hear it from? Question 5: How can we make sure they hear it?</p>	 <p>TOOL 2.4 Nine Questions to Ask to Develop Strategic Advocacy Activities And Advocacy Strategy Planning Worksheet</p>

² Complete guidance on how to implement UNICEF’s approach to advocacy is available in the *Youth Advocacy Guide* (UNICEF, 2019) and the *Advocacy Toolkit. A guide to influencing decisions that improve children’s lives* published by UNICEF in 2010.

Question 6: What do we have?
 Question 7: What do we need?
 Question 8: How do we begin to take action?
 Question 9: How do we tell if it's working?

Step 3: Design *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* national tools

This step builds from the initiative's analysis and strategy design to adapt regional *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* advocacy and communication activities and materials and develop new communication tools to engage participant groups.

Several proposed actions are required to complete this step. They are listed below.

What needs to be done	Description	Tools
3.0 Adapt regional advocacy and communication tools and complement them with new ones, as needed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> regional initiative's advocacy and SBC materials. 2) Review existing national advocacy and SBC materials and tools that focus on exclusive breastfeeding in terms of fit with <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> objectives. 3) Write a creative brief in line with the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> strategy 4) Assemble a team of professionals from various backgrounds (creative, health, market research, and others) to assess existing national messages using the strategy document as a guide. 5) Adapt regional, national and/or create new, context-specific SBC tools based on the national strategy and resources. 6) Include the <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> regional branding (this cannot be changed). 7) For new tools, test communication concepts, words 	 <p><i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> SBC materials: counselling cards and community radio scripts and jingles.</p> <p>Visit Compass for a curated collection of SBC resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to write a creative brief: https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-write-creative-brief • How to adapt materials: https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-adapt-sbcc-materials • How to conduct a pre-test: https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-

	<p>(messages) and possible formats in advance to ensure that they resonate with participant groups and they call to action.</p> <p>8) Pre-test all SBC materials with their intended participant groups in terms of: emotional appeal, relevance, comprehension, acceptability, persuasion and recall.</p> <p>9) Revise the SBC materials based on results and re-test if needed.</p> <p>Source: Based on UNICEF’s seven steps and criteria for developing SBCC messages and materials (UNICEF, 2013)</p>	<p>guides/how-conduct-pretest</p>
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Step 4: Deliver

Illustrative timeframe: one - two years

What needs to be done	Description	Tools
4.0 Implement activities planned for in the national strategy document.	<p>Implementation should ensure that systems, competencies and messages are embedded within existing programmes and platforms. <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> activities to be implemented include (and are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch events, national and regional • Community engagement and identification of small doable actions • Capacity building and supportive supervision • Media broadcasting and monitoring • Champion engagement • Interpersonal communication • Advocacy and awareness raising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional initiative launch agenda (Cote d’Ivoire)

Step 5: Monitor and Adjust SBC and advocacy activities

Programme managers should monitor the extent to which *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* SBC activities are meeting their intended objectives. The assessment and learning process continues throughout the implementation of the initiative. Reliable, timely and continuous monitoring is needed to track activity inputs and outputs, implementation quality, and changes in outcome indicators such as perceptions and practices in order to adjust and improve results (UNICEF, 2013).

Illustrative timeframe: throughout implementation and at the end of the initiative

What need to be done	Description	Tools
5.0 Continuous M&E.	A continuous monitoring, assessment and adjustment process must be included as part of the initiative to improve results. It is recommended that <i>Stronger With Breastmilk Only</i> indicators be integrated into existing M&E systems and platforms to enable programmes to streamline the data collection process. Where funding is available, programmes may decide to introduce small surveys for behavioural monitoring to ensure that the initiative is reaching intended SBC objectives. Strategic use of M&E data is recommended to install a continuous learning cycle and adjust the initiative according to lessons learned.	 <p>Adapt the results framework presented in the Guidance document</p>

BOX 1: For more information and resources on the SBC process

For information on Alive & Thrive’s process for IYCF programme design: Sanghvi T, Jimerson A, Hajeebhoy N, Zewale M, Nguyen GH. 2013. Tailoring communication strategies to improve infant and young child feeding practices in different country settings. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*. 34.(3).³

Easy to access resources and like-minded communities are also available to help with the conceptualization of communication for social and behaviour change programmes. They include web-based platforms with online resources, such as:

- Compass for SBC Website (<https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/>), which offers a curated collection of SBC resources.
- C-Change Project’s toolkit <https://www.c-changeprogram.org/>
- Make Me a Change Agent https://coregroup.org/wp-content/uploads/media-backup/documents/Resources/Tools/MMCA_English_Final.pdf
- Designing Behavior Change curriculum: https://coregroup.org/wp-content/uploads/media-backup/documents/Resources/Tools/DBC_English.pdf

³ Source : <https://www.aliveandthrive.org/resources/tailoring-communication-strategies-to-improve-infant-and-young-child-feeding-practices-in-different-country-settings/>

- The Grandmother Project: <https://www.fsnnetwork.org/stories-without-ending-adult-education-tool-dialogue-and-social-change> and <https://grandmotherproject.org/>

To assess whether the *Stronger With Breastmilk Only* SBC strategy design and implementation meets SBCC quality standards, consult: The Health Communication Capacity Collaborative's SBCC Check-in: Quality Standards for SBCC at <https://healthcommcapacity.org/qa-in-sbcc/>.